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Abstract

Views Wentworth's personal "descent into hell" "from a Jungian perspective [...] which reveals a man's obsession with his anima, or feminine archetype, his consequent repression of true selfhood, and his final dispossession of both, leading him ultimately to insanity, or, as Williams puts it, to hell."

Additional Keywords

Anima in Descent Into Hell; Jungian analysis of Descent Into Hell; Williams, Charles—Characters—Lawrence Wentworth; Williams, Charles. Descent Into Hell

Wentworth in the Garden of Gomorrah

A Study of the Anima in Descent Into Hell

Colleen Warren

Of the three parallel plots in Charles Williams' *Descent into Hell*, the plot which lends itself to the largest variety of interpretation is perhaps Lawrence Wentworth's. This plot has been read variously as a man's possession by a succubus, as an example of negative coinherence, and as a self-indulgent sexual fantasy, among others. One interpretation which has been almost wholly neglected, however, is that of viewing Wentworth's "Descent into Hell" from a Jungian perspective, a perspective which reveals a man's obsession with his anima, or feminine archetype, his consequent repression of true selfhood, and his final dispossession of both, leading him ultimately to insanity, or, as Williams puts it, to hell.

Such a reading is entirely compatible with Jungian psychology. Jung suggests that every man possesses an anima, or feminine component, which has been unconsciously developed within him throughout his evolutionary progress. This image is not of a particular woman, but is "an hereditary factor of primordial origin engraved in the living organic system of the man, an imprint or archetype of all the ancestral experiences of the female, a deposit, as it were, of all the impressions ever made by a woman." [1] As a "deposit" of the impressions made by women, the anima possesses all the traits traditionally associated with women. For example, women traditionally value personal relationships, embody sensuality and eroticism, are more emotional than men, are intuitive and subjective rather than rational and objective, are dependent and passive, and are imaginative rather than factual and realistic. An over-emphasis of the anima results in these traits being strongly manifested in a male, to the exclusion of his masculine tendencies, whereas a repression of the anima results in the accentuation of traditionally masculine character.

Of course, none of these traits of the anima are in themselves good or bad; however, according to Jung, the anima does have a light and a dark aspect, and from which side these traits are taken determines the quality of those traits. At its best, "something strangely meaningful clings to her, a secret knowledge or hidden wisdom" [2]; at its worst, the anima is "a siren, melusina (mermaid) wood-nymph, Grace, or Erlking's daughter, or a lamia or succubus, who infatuates young men and sucks the life out of them." [3] Elsewhere, Jung further describes the nature of this dark anima:

She intensifies, exaggerates, falsifies, and mythologizes all emotional relationships with his work and with other people of both sexes. The resultant fantasies and entanglements are all her doing. When the anima is strongly constellated, she softens the man's character and makes him touchy, irritable, moody, jealous, vain, and unadjusted. [4]

Clearly, it is this darker side of the anima which Wentworth becomes obsessed with and it is his relationship with this anima that becomes for him, as Jung puts it, "a test of courage, an ordeal by fire for

the spiritual and moral forces of man" [5], a test which he eventually fails.

However, Wentworth is not always possessed by his anima. In fact, at the opening of the novel, Wentworth is presented as a man totally preoccupied by masculine activities: as a historian, he "identifies scholarship with himself" (34) and is only concerned with facts, details, and organization. [6] "His mind reduced the world to diagrams, and he saw to it that the diagrams fitted." (34) All which he regards as pleasant is somehow related to his work: "the reviews -- of his last book, or his financial security, or his intentions about his immediate future work, or the permanent alterations he hoped he had caused in universal thought..." (36)

Wentworth is a man proud of his reputation, ambitious to further his career, as is especially clear in his continuing competition with Aston Moffatt. The repression of his anima has been up to this point extreme and nearly complete: "He had never had a friend or a lover; he had never, in any possible means been 'in love'." (34) Fifty years of repression of his feminine nature make him especially vulnerable to the awakening power of his anima and the knowledge that "his body was beginning to feel that its future was shortening, and that it had perhaps been too cautious in the past." (34) Jungian psychology reinforces this connection -- "The very manly men are most subject to characteristic weaknesses; their attitude towards the unconscious has a womanly weakness and impressionability." [7] Not only does Wentworth's one-sidedness predispose him to vulnerability, but according to Jung, repressing or undervaluing the feminine side usually results in the appearance of the dark side of the anima rather than the positive [8], as proves to be true in Wentworth's case. Understandably, then, Wentworth perceives the first stirrings of his anima as a "destruction of balance" and is uncertain as to "what he would give up for her, or rather for the manner of life which included her." (37)

For Wentworth to project his newly-acknowledged anima upon Adela Hunt is normal; in fact, "since this image is unconscious, it is always unconsciously projected upon the person of the beloved, and is one of the chief reasons for passionate attraction or aversion." [9] When, however, his attentions are rejected, Wentworth begins to succumb to the intensified power of his long-ignored anima. At first, he continues to surreptitiously pursue Adela, waiting for her and Hugh at the train station, though he is aware that by so doing he has

yielded to the chaos within rather than the chaos without... A remnant of intelligence cried to him that this was the road of mania, and self-indulgence leading to mania... He went out of the room, down the soft swift stairs of his mind, into the steets of his mind, to find the phantoms of his mind. He desired hell. (50-51)

Having failed at winning Adela, and wanting no other projection for his anima, Wentworth begins the first destructive stages of turning his anima inwards, of creating a substance for the sensations that he does not want, but that he can not ignore. At first

his fancy created for him the unheard melody of the footsteps. His body renewed and absorbed the fatal knowledge of his desire. He listened, in the false faith of desire... It must happen; his body told him it must happen. He must have what he wanted, because... but still those feet did not come. (81-82)

Wentworth does not yet hear the footsteps because a thread of intelligence still restrains him from giving himself up entirely to his anima. It is only the news of Aston Moffatt's knighthood that finally crushes the already shattered fragments of his intellect. At that moment, he determines "then and forever, forever, forever, that he would hate the fact, and therefore facts." (85) By rejecting the strongest feature of his masculinity, the intellectual love of facts, Wentworth accepts illusion, and is thus able to give form to his feminine aspect. It is at this point that his anima first appears to him in bodily form.

The nature of Wentworth's relationship to his projected anima is complicated and very specialized. Though he momentarily believes that the form is Adela, he quickly realizes, through the "faint unlikeness" to Adela and her lack of relation to Hugh, that the image before him "could not be Adela, for even Adela had never been so like Adela as this." (87) Yet logically, because this is Wentworth's fabrication of his anima's initial projection upon Adela, the image possesses all the physical characteristics of Adela, though in seemingly perfected form. She is "that truth which is the vision of romantic love, in which the beloved becomes supremely her own adorable and eternal self, the glory and splendor of her own existence." (87) The character traits which his anima possesses, however, bear no resemblance whatsoever to Adela; her submissiveness, softness, and devotion are clearly the idealized qualities of Wentworth's unconscious anima. Though these qualities appear to be perfect, they are of course the same qualities which eventually lead Wentworth to his self-destruction. Again, Jung reinforces that though the projection of an anima is "often regarded and felt as ideal, it may turn out that the man has manifestly married his own worst weakness." [10] Similarly, neither are the physical characteristics entirely ideal; Jung explains that an anima has a timeless quality, which may make a woman appear young, yet always there is a sense of underlying experience and age [11], as is graphically shown in the anima's transformations from youth to age. Upon waking from his dream of groans from the abyss, Wentworth does not notice his anima "had grown haggard and old; its fullness fell away; its eyes were blurred. The meaning which he had given it had departed; an imbecile face stared blankly over him." (147) And at this point, because he still has a degree of conscious control over his mind and soul, Wentworth can will her back into youthful perfection: "Her terrible and infinite senility receded; Lawrence Wentworth's strong deceit forbade her to pass on to death and recalled her to apparent life... The suicide in the soul had not reached his own." (148)

Therefore, Wentworth seems fully aware that the image he has conjured up is separate from Adela, however oblivious he is to the image's true physical

and mental characteristics. Beyond this point, the extent of his cognizance is hazy and confused. Much of the time Wentworth regards his anima as an entity separate from himself, though created by him and possibly from him. Yet at other times, he seems to be close to recognizing that his anima is a false projection, an indivisible part of his own being. In fact, from her first appearance, in a convoluted stream of consciousness passage, Wentworth shows this confused vacillation:

... then he would know for themselves, two, two and true, on the way he was going, and the peace in himself, and the scent of her in him, and the her, meant for him, in him; that was the she he knew, and he must think the more of himself... to get away from Hugh's Adela was to find... the Adela that was his, since what he wanted was always and everywhere his. (89)

Wentworth seems closest to realizing that the anima is actually a part of his own unconscious in his initial walk with her in the "garden," described as a walk "inside his own body." (89) In the garden ("he was himself and a wood at the same time") he can hear his heart beating, can feel his senses lulled as they would be "if he were inside his own body"; the air of the garden is his own breath, the turning paths are the "many coils in his body." Even the landscape — the hills, valleys, and contours of the garden — are his own:

Between them, covering acres of ground, an enormous shape lay, something like a man's; it lay on its face, its shoulders and buttocks rose in mounds, and the head beyond; he could not see the legs lower than the thighs, for that was where he himself lay, and they could not be seen, for they were his own. (94)

In addition, Wentworth admits that he is, by being in the garden, separated from the world of reality, living only in his mind. Others, particularly Adela and Hugh, belong on the outside, he on the inside, far from the "shapes that ran about, harsh and menacing, outside the glade or the garden or the forest, outside the mist." (91) Even this scene, however, does not conclusively illustrate that Wentworth acknowledges the anima as part of his unconscious, but only proves that he has created a fantasy of his mind. By contrast, Williams' view is unquestionably clear. Even the language which Williams uses evokes the Jungian view of the evolutionary rooting of the anima, its inseparability from man's unconscious and its foreignness to his masculinity. "... the she that was he, and all he in the she... She whose origin is with man's, kindred to him as he to his beasts, alien from him as he from his beasts." (95)

Later in the novel, in a passage which perceptively refers to Wentworth's anima as the "feminine offspring of his masculinity," Williams even more concretely shows that the relationship Wentworth fosters is one of self-idolatry; in Jungian terms, Wentworth has projected his anima into himself and consequently worships and intensifies his feminine side to the exclusion of his masculine side; since the anima is part of himself, the resultant relationship is self-adoration, an unbalanced, obsessive adoration.

The shape of Lawrence Wentworth's desire had emerged from the power of his body... he had

assented to the company of the shape which could not be except by his will and was imperceptibly to possess his will... He could exercise upon it all arts but one; he could not ever discover by it or practice toward it the freedom of love. A man cannot love himself; he can only idolize it, and over the idol delightfully tyrannize -- without purpose. (139)

If, as Jung suggests, a preoccupation with the anima prompts a man to repress his masculine characteristics and to manifest his feminine traits, then this shift must be evident in Wentworth, as indeed it is. Wentworth's strongly masculine characteristics are rather quickly replaced by numerous feminine qualities, among them dependency, emotionalism, passivity, intuition, and eroticism. Interestingly, because the female image, in a Jungian reading of DIH, represents Wentworth's anima and is therefore an inseparable component of Wentworth's unconscious, the female traits which arise are not manifested exclusively in Wentworth's personality, but in his anima's as well. Though Wentworth comes to possess many feminine qualities, many in their exaggerated and negative forms, I will limit myself in this paper to the three I see as most instrumental to his decline: the exclusiveness of a personal relationship, the decline of intellect, and the preoccupation with the imagination.

Traditionally, women value personal relationships more highly than do men [12]; Wentworth, for example, before his preoccupation with his anima, entirely neglected personal relationships. Instead, he invites groups of people to his home for intellectual and cultural discussions and is an active member of the scholarly community. Once Wentworth has projected his anima, inward, however, his emphasis shifts dramatically to a severely limited relationship in which he is the only actual participant -- self-idolatry, as Williams presents it. Wentworth's anima actively encourages such self-absorption by convincing him that he does not think enough about himself (and indirectly, of his anima) and, in a twist of God's words concerning Eve's creation, urges that "It's good for man to be alone." (92) Following this advice, Wentworth becomes increasingly exclusive in his attentions to his anima. Reciprocally, his anima becomes intuitively devoted to his needs. Thus, "there flowed into him from the creature by his side the sensation of his absolute power to satisfy her" and likewise his anima "surrounded him with devotion, as very well it could, seeing what the only reality of its devotion was. He did not need to say much, nor himself to initiate approach. It took all that activity upon itself..." (140)

Understandably, this devotion leads to a strong mutual dependence. Wentworth clings to his anima as a refuge, draws her into consciousness at any time he begins to feel especially troubled, as for example he does when he learns of Aston Moffatt's knighthood (84), when he cannot concentrate on his work (149), or when he thinks of Hugh (147). Similarly, his anima is dependent upon Wentworth's total preoccupation so as to maintain control of his psyche; thus it is at the times when Wentworth most struggles to regain rationality or order that his anima feels most threatened and clutches him most possessively, at one point even forcing Wentworth to carry her, a literal representation of a psychological decision (142).

Undeniably, a strong focus of Wentworth's relationship with his anima is the fulfillment of his sexual desires. His anima is "an ape of love's vitality, and a parody also of its morality. It possessed a semblance of initiative and it had appeased, as is all lovers' duty, the fantasies of the heart." (142-143) However, it is not this unrepressed sexuality which is the source of Wentworth's problem; this is not, as some have suggested, merely a recounting of a man's erotic obsession. Rather, as Jung points out, the sexuality of the anima is not the cause of the disturbance, but only an effect; the true problem is that the person "simply does not understand how the world has altered, and what his attitude would have to be in order to adapt to it." [13]

The exclusiveness and intensity of this relationship naturally leads Wentworth to neglect numerous masculine traits which before this point he had strongly accentuated. The most noticeable decline is in his intellect. Repeatedly Wentworth acknowledges that "he was outraging his intelligence with this invited deceit," yet significantly, "he did not wish to know it." (143) Thus, while on the one hand he recognizes the destruction of this masculine trait, he on the other hand prefers to ignore, as much as is possible, the implications of that loss. No longer able to confine his anima to nighttime hours, Wentworth eventually allows his feminine side to possess his daytime existence as well -- his work, his scholarship, even his intellect.

In those earlier hours the night and his nightly companion were always indistinct. He preferred that indistinctness; he preferred, in the bright July mornings, to think of his work -- the books he was reading, the book he was writing. He remembered that he had still a letter to write against Aston Moffatt, and had already begun it. But though he thought about his next unwritten sentence he could not manage to write it down... His mind was certainly losing power. Afterwards as the day grew on, and the strength of his masculinity returned and swelled in him, he came to repose on his knowledge of its (his anima's) actual presence. But that morning he was troubled; he felt obscurely that something was attacking his peace. He moved restlessly; he got up and walked about; he tried to find refuge in this or the other thought; he failed... It was after a solitary lunch and a fretful hour of work that he allowed himself at last to long for the succubus by day... (148-49)

The state described by Williams in this passage uncannily parallels Jung's conception of the effects of an overemphasized anima, which mentions the same lack of concentration, feelings of uneasiness, and restlessness. Frieda Fordham paraphrases: "She disturbs the attempt to concentrate by whispering absurd notions in his ear, spoils the day by creating the vague, unpleasant sensation that there is something physically wrong with him, or haunts his sleep with seductive visions." [14]

Once Wentworth has allowed his anima to influence even his intellect, the knowledge which once defined his life loses its significance. Filtered through his anima, whose qualities oppose such masculine traits, historical facts seem irrelevant and distanced. "It sat in his room and talked to him, with his own borrowed

intelligence. It spoke of Caesar and Napoleon, of generals and campaigns -- traditions it could not know, history it could not know, history it could not recall, humanity it could not share." (149)

The extent to which Wentworth de-values history and its accompanying preciseness and factualness is illustrated by a seemingly minor incident in the novel -- Wentworth's approval of the Guards' uniforms. The historical authenticity of the uniforms is imperfect, yet the imperfections could be corrected with only slight alterations. By this time, however, Wentworth is so controlled by his anima that he cares not at all for authenticity or fact; he has chosen falseness and illusion in his own life and is thus content to approve the uniforms despite their falsity.

Wentworth's refusal of truth and fact lead him inevitably to acceptance of illusion, "another veil between himself and the truth." (146) Again, this is a feminine tendency, a distortion of a woman's imaginative and creative impulses. The more deeply Wentworth draws into his illusory world, the stronger is his anima's control, for, according to Jung, an archetype's effects are most powerful "when consciousness is weakest and most restricted, and where fantasy can overrun the facts of the outer world." [15] The interior world of his anima, with its seeming perfection, satiation of desires, and total devotion to self, attracts Wentworth far more than the world of reality, which he gradually comes to see as harsh and menacing, a world he needs protection against:

He wanted to pull the curtains, to lock the doors, to bar out what was in his brain by barring his house, to be with what was irreconcilably not the world. He wanted either to shut himself wholly away from the world in a sepulcher of desire and satiety and renewed desire; or to destroy, if not the world, at least one form that walked in the world. (149)

That he would now wish to destroy Adela, the original object of his desire, is the most significant outgrowth of Wentworth's preference for illusion. Adela was at first the person most prized by Wentworth; later she, and the desire he still feels for her, become his most convincing reasons to remain rooted in a world of actualities. In another world, he could never hope to possess her. To reject Adela, then, is to also reject the world of which she is a part.

This rejection is not sudden, but gradual. When Adela first begins to lose her appeal, the thought of her is simply "a little disagreeable -- no longer troublesome or joyous but merely disagreeable." (144) Later Wentworth's attitude becomes more severe, largely because he sees Adela's reality as a distraction to his illusory world. "He found himself disliking the life of the actual Adela; he could be so happy with the substance by him if only the other were dead." (146) In one of his last encounters with Adela at the dress rehearsal, this intense hatred is replaced by a profound indifference toward her; Adela's qualities themselves do not interest Wentworth, but only as they are seen in contrast to his mistress' qualities.

He had supposed, in the night and the morning, that he had hated the Adela of the world; he had had her in his imagination as an enemy and a threat. He had overrated her. She was, in fact, nothing like what he had, and now he had met her he had hardly

recognized her... It (Adela) was like the rest of the tiresome world into which he had been compelled to enter -- violent, smashing, bewildering by its harsh clamor, and far from the soft sweetness of his unheard melody. (155-56)

Though it would perhaps seem logical that by entirely rejecting Adela, Wentworth could be freed to devote all his attentions to his anima, exactly the opposite is true. Conversely, it is immediately after Wentworth's final denouncement of Adela that he first begins to lose interest in his anima as well. Adela, hysterical and fearing pursuit by the resurrected dead, flees to Wentworth for help. Wentworth, unmoved, denies that he knows her, watches blankly as she collapses on his lawn, and drags her body from his property to the side of the road. Rejoining his anima, he realizes that now "he did not altogether want her... she was less preferable now than his unimagined dream. He wanted to want her; he did not want her to go; but he could not -- not as he had done. Even she was a betrayal, she was a thing outside." (223) At the same time, however, he seems dimly aware that to make the final rejection would be to leave him "at the bottom of his rope." (224)

Wentworth, in rejecting Adela, has sighed a final "no" to reality and fact; in rejecting his own anima, he has done something even more psychologically damaging -- he has dissociated one part of his mind from the other. "The creature that had been with him so long was with him no more... it had never quite regained its own illusive apparition; senility and youth had mingled in its face, and in their mingling found a third degree of corruption." (241-2) So extreme was his identification with his anima that his masculine side has in the meantime almost entirely atrophied; thus, he is left with a void, his mind emptied and maintaining little control over his physical self. The effects are immediately apparent -- the mental "pulling and thrusting" has wholly exhausted him. The change is even more marked a few days later, when Pauline and Stanhope notice him at the station: he is now an exhausted, clumsy, and disoriented man, unable to perceive the outward world and even more uncertain about inner realities. The final stages of his decline can be seen in his cab ride to the dinner party and at the dinner itself. His mind has elapsed into near insanity, no longer able to create any kind of order, just as he, in his jumbled thoughts, cannot correctly place Madame Tussaud's wax figures in their proper positions. Significantly, all the symptoms which Wentworth exhibits at the age of fifty are predicted by Jung in his description of such a detachment from the anima at middle age:

After the middle of life, however, permanent loss of the anima means a diminution of vitality, of flexibility, and of human kindness. The result, as a rule, is... resignation, weariness, sloppiness, irresponsibility, and finally a childish ramollissement... [16]

Thus, Lawrence Wentworth's decline in Descent into Hell can be read as a man's archetypal conflicts with his anima: his initial repression of it, his later overemphasis of it, and his eventual rejection of it, resulting in insanity. Throughout the novel, Wentworth continually sways on the rope, never achieving the balance which a coexistence of his masculine and

Continued on page 54

sex. Weston believes he has a right to the lands of Malacandra. Devine believes that the planet's gold is his for the taking.

The judgement of the utopians is not death or imprisonment for these outrages. It is simply the decision, which they are capable of enforcing, that the miscreants must go home.

It is remarkable that these two writers from different eras produced such similar writing. They also approached the issue of the role of women in the scheme of things quite differently. Gilman wrote and spoke from the perspective of social reform of the status and treatment of women. Lewis considered the matter of women from a religious and symbolic aspect, such as is demonstrated in his works That Hideous Strength, Till We Have Faces and the Narnia stories. Historically, the two approaches have as often come to radically opposite conclusions as they have come to similar conclusions.

In fact, reading these books together gives support to the feminists' claim that their concerns are not just "female" concerns, but are -- or should be -- concerns of the entire human race. Peace, a more equitable distribution of goods, true community amongst peoples, an harmonious co-existence with nature, freedom from oppressions -- all these and more were achieved in Herland and on Malacandra. It should be discomfiting to realize that Gilman's Herlanders are not aliens at all, but humans, albeit female. Yet men, the normal young men of our culture, respond to them as if they were extraterrestrial as Martians.

The juxtaposed reading of these two books, Herland and Out of the Silent Planet, provides much food for thought. We see that men and women are indeed quite different, perhaps as alien to one another as a Martian would be to a terrestrial. And yet, how clearly they share similar fantasies.

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Wentworth, continued from page 44

feminine natures could give him. Instead, he slowly descends, giving up his masculinity as he simultaneously warps and misuses his femininity. Finally, his grip on reality and on his unconscious gone, he, in the words of Jung, is "caught and entangled in aimless experience, and the judging intellect with its categorization proves itself powerless... It is a moment of collapse. We sink into a final depth." [17]

Notes

[1] C.G. Jung, The Development of Personality. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 19), p. 198.

[2] Violet Staub De Laszlo, ed. The Basic Writings of C.G. Jung. (New York: Modern Library, 1959), p. 315.

[3] De Laszlo, p. 309.

[4] C.G. Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Bollingen edition (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 70.

[5] De Laszlo, p. 313.

[6] Charles Williams, Descent into Hell. (New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1949) All further quotations from this book will be followed by pagination within parentheses.

[7] De Laszlo, p. 274.

[8] Frieda Fordham, An Introduction to Jung's Psychology. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1953, rpt. 1964), p. 54.

[10] De Laszlo, p. 159.

[11] Fordham, p. 54.

[12] It should be noted that not only does Wentworth's valuation of a personal relationship demonstrate his anima's increasing control, but also the traits which characterize that relationship. Devotion, intuition, dependency, and eroticism are also all traditionally feminine traits.

[13] De Laszlo, p. 314.

[14] Fordham, p. 54.

[15] Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 67.

[16] *ibid.*, p. 71.

[17] De Laszlo, p. 316.

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Tales Newly Told, continued from page 36

dialogue. David Sullivan, a young Lady Gregory fan, is accidentally gifted with second sight and becomes involved in the affairs of the Sidhe. He gains the enmity of Ailill Windmaster, a Loki-like figure in Tir na nOg. When David's little brother is replaced by a changeling, and his Uncle Dale is struck by a fairy dart, he and his close friends Alec McLean and Liz Hughes (is this meant to be a union of Irish, Scottish, and Welsh?) must openly challenge the Sidhe and undergo the champion's ordeal. The depiction of the Otherworld's crystalline beauty is quite effective; it is the Sidhe themselves, as characters, who pose a problem. They follow Lady Gregory's model too closely, and as such become mere literary icons, too predictable to engage our imagination as great Otherworld powers. In contrast, we have the wild fluid, protean face of Faerie appearing in the mountain storm that besets David when he first issues his challenge. Here is the true, perilous spirit of the Otherworld, and the cardboard-cutout figures of the Irish "gods" make a poor showing in its light. One wishes that Deitz had done something more daring, perhaps made an original, dynamic blend of the Irish material and the Cherokee mythology he also claims as a source.

As it is, Windmaster's Bane is a well-told young-adult novel that could have aspired to something more. Since David Sullivan does not seem to have come to the end of his adventures, we may eventually be allowed to scale those heights we have as yet only glimpsed from afar.